

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

City Council Meeting of September 21, 2020

Councilmembers –

Your agenda for Monday night is as follows:

NOTE: The September 21, 2020 City Council meeting will be held remotely utilizing video conferencing technology in compliance with Stay Home, Stay Safe requirements restricting public gatherings, including civic activities. However, this is still an open public meeting as defined by the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA). The City will be using Microsoft Teams to livestream the council meeting. Members of the public do not need to download anything to view the proceedings. Click on this [link](#) to join the live event at 5pm Monday, September 21.

Item A, Public Comment. In compliance with Stay Home, Stay Safe restrictions, and consistent with new guidelines established for public meetings through the OPMA, in-person public comment is limited to those meetings when a public hearing is on the agenda. For those meetings, the Council Chambers will be open to the public. Those who wish to offer a comment in person will be required to wear a face mask and observe social distancing requirements. Comments may also be submitted by emailing City Clerk Susan Duncan at susanduncan@cityofferndale.org. Comments received prior to 4:30pm Monday, September 21st will be included in the meeting record.

Item B, Consent Agenda: Approval of September 8, 2020 Council meeting minutes, authorization of September 4, 2020 payroll, approval of August 2020 claims, and approval of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) funding recommendations.

- Approval of LTAC Funding Recommendations: The Finance and Administration Committee has placed approval of the LTAC funding recommendations on the consent agenda with a recommendation of approval. LTAC funding is derived from the Hotel-Motel Fund and must be spent on tourism-related activities. Council is required to approve the LTAC recommendations as a whole and cannot modify the funding amounts or add more organizations to the list. Any modifications to the recommendations would need to be made by the LTAC. With the exception of a recommendation not to provide funding to Effectv/Comcast for regional advertising that the LTAC felt would be ineffective in Ferndale's market, the other six organizations that requested funding were recommended to receive their full request, for a total of \$54,000.

Item C, Capital Projects Update: Public Works Capital Projects Manager Katy Radder will provide an update on the City's capital projects.

Item D, Presentation – Court/Council Chambers Improvements Update: Mayor Greg Hansen, City Administrator Jori Burnett, and Public Works Director Kevin Renz will provide an update on Municipal Court/ Council Chambers improvements. This update will include a review of interim improvements necessary to address minimum safety and security issues within the Municipal Court, temporary relocation of jury trials, potential displacement of Court during construction activity, and progress on permanent City Facilities.

Item E-H: Mayor, Council, Department, and Committee Reports.

Final Thoughts – City Facilities

Councilmembers –

The Court/Council Chambers Improvement update presentation is intended to keep the City Council and the public informed of progress related to City Facilities. The interim courtroom improvements reflect what we believe are the minimum updates necessary to establish a safe and secure courtroom environment, and for that reason there are few alternative design configurations that could be considered in the realm of being cost-effective.

With regard to permanent City Facility planning, 2020 has had such all-encompassing impacts that a complete stop to all long-term facility planning could be justified. However, Staff and the Administration firmly believe that 2020 has further demonstrated the need for new or expanded facilities, and that a full-stop on long term planning for these facilities would not prevent their need, but would only limit the City's preparation for that need.

As noted in a previous Administrator's Report, the Council will not be asked to take banked capacity to fund these improvements as part of the 2021 budget process. Discussion of long-term funding should, in our opinion, be delayed until it is responsible to re-engage on that issue.

However, this does not mean that the City should not continue to evaluate its long-term space needs, or to discuss potential locations for new or expanded City facilities. These are relatively low-cost questions (all long-term planning that will be conducted in 2020 is well within the 2020 budget), as the majority of the information can be developed internally. The City has spent extensive time drafting plans for potential facilities, but Staff believes that the needs assessment process that was conducted several years ago did not result in a description of needs, or perhaps more accurately a conversion from "wants" to "needs," that translated into the right facility (or facilities) for Ferndale.

The construction of new or expanded City facilities, whenever it happens, will likely be fairly controversial – the funding for these facilities must come from the local community, and the community has every right to question whether their money should be spent on these facilities, other projects, or kept in their own pocket. While funding facilities that are necessary to provide the services that the public expects is ultimately the responsibility of the citizens of Ferndale, it is our responsibility to ensure that the evaluation of these facilities is responsible and cost effective too.

See you Monday – Jori